

SENATE FISH AND GAME

EXHIBIT NO. 5

DATE 1/25/11

BILL NO. SB 135

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Senator,

Please support SB 336 [SB135 now]. With the increasing prevalence of archery, black powder, and long range hunting and the diminishing field craft of the average hunter, the blood tracking dog would aid in the recovery of many big game animals. We use dogs to pursue upland game and waterfowl where they are considered an important conservation tool. I would shudder to think of the number of ducks, geese, pheasants, huns, and sharp tails we would have lost this year if not for the superb work of our dogs. This same talent could be employed under SB 336 to aid the hunter in conservation of big game species. I have lost two deer in my career as a big game hunter and nearly lost an elk. After my experience around bird dogs I believe that those deer would have been recovered with the aid of a blood tracking dog. This is anecdotal information to be sure, but I am equally positive that I am not in the minority of hunters. The language of SB 336 [135] limits the use of dogs with a 50' leash and I think protects the fair chase ideal of Montana big game hunting.

Thank you,
Todd Baier
Billings, MT